

**Governor's Interagency Task Force  
on  
Pre/Post Release Programming  
Report and Recommendations  
*March 31, 2008***

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### **Interagency Task Force on Pre/Post Release Education and Training**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“For a woman, who's an addict, fresh out of prison, not many people extended their hand. With the help of the WORC program and the Work Place I am now in school at UMass Boston. At the end of the year I will have my License for Alcohol and Drug Counseling. I am also part of an internship program at the South Boston Resource Center. If it wasn't for the encouragement and care from the staff at the Work Place I know I wouldn't be where I am today.”\**

*\*The above quote was provided by Jane Smith (name changed), a client of the Women Offender Re-entry Collaborative program operated at The Work Place, a One Stop Career Center in Boston.*

Jane's story, unfortunately, is not the typical outcome for individuals with criminal records seeking employment and training support from government and community organizations in Massachusetts. Too often, individuals with a criminal record are unable to point to the same success as Jane, and far more often the past criminal history of rehabilitated offenders remains a significant barrier to gaining and keeping employment and housing. As a response to this need, Governor Deval Patrick directed the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development to convene a task force to examine pre/post release education and training for ex-offenders.

Estimates of the number of individuals released from correctional facilities in Massachusetts range from 20,000 to 25,000 annually. Nearly 8 in 10 of these individuals are released from a county house of correction after having served 9 months or less. Success in re-entry for many of these individuals, in the final analysis, will depend on their ability to find stable housing, support services and sustainable employment.

Criminal justice professionals, community activists, and researchers generally agree that the costs of incarceration have risen dramatically over time. At the same time, research demonstrates that the lack of opportunities to treat health, mental health, and substance abuse issues as well as access to education and employment opportunities are strong factors in increasing the likelihood of ex-offenders returning to prison. The rising costs of incarceration suggest that public safety and public fiscal health would be far better served by facilitating and investing in the successful re-entry of ex-offenders.

In order to advance a policy agenda that supports the successful reintegration of ex-offenders and reduces recidivism, Governor Patrick signed Executive Order (#495) “Regarding the Use and Dissemination of Criminal Offender Record Information by the Executive Department” in January of 2008.

Beginning in March of 2008, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development convened three task force sessions. These sessions focused on the role of agencies that provide pre- and post-release services to offenders, allowed those agencies to share information about their work and identify gaps and strengths in existing services, and highlighted the elements (including employment) essential for successful re-entry.

This report provides an overview of pre- and post-release services, highlights models across the state, and makes a series of recommendations on “elements of a successful re-entry model” based upon research and feedback through the Task Force.

### Task Force Goals

- Review existing pre-release and post-release training programs for ex-offenders.
- Make recommendations on replicating successful programs that facilitate ex-offender employment and educational training.

The recommendations focus on increasing connections between correctional institutions and community resources through the creation of a “continuum of service” model – beginning on day 1 of incarceration – that articulates the continuity of services for ex-offenders beginning with correctional facilities through to community organizations and resources. The report suggests the need for several statewide tools that would also improve service connections and continuity of services. Finally, the report suggests an on-going Re-entry Workgroup for state and regional partners representing major stakeholders to develop, implement, and evaluate policy and operational changes.

In addition to those individuals leaving prisons, a number of people are charged each year with a criminal offense but are not incarcerated or under formal supervision. These individuals do not have access to a specialized “re-entry” program, which are available for a portion of individuals leaving prisons. This population will need to be considered as part of the re-entry population in need of making connections to community resources.

While the task force reviewed many existing efforts that show promise and provide support to ex-offenders, it is important to note that these efforts are not system wide, and do not serve all ex-offenders who need these support services. Whether it is because of capacity constraints or other concerns, it is vital that these gaps in service for ex-offenders across all the correctional, workforce and educational systems be recognized and addressed if an effort to build a more comprehensive and successful re-entry program is undertaken by state policy makers.

## OPPORTUNITIES & GOALS

The Task Force members believe that the successful re-entry of ex-offenders will reduce return to criminal behavior by ex-offenders, improve the public fiscal health, and increase public safety. Massachusetts should consider strategies to reduce recidivism and decrease financial and social costs of return to criminal behavior to communities and government agencies. The Task Force explored various strategies to impact recidivism and increase successful re-entry, re-engagement and re-employment for ex-offenders. The Commonwealth has the opportunity to create a “re-entry framework” that supports successful transitions from custody to the community.

According to a 2004 Center for Impact Research study, recidivism is generally understood to be a relapse into prior criminal behavior, measured by return to prison for a new offense. However, there is no standard definition of recidivism throughout the United States. Rather, states look to a range of criteria including the duration of time an ex-offender is monitored post release, the type of offenses included, and the inclusion of parole violations. Due to this range of definitions, defining and making quantitative measures of reductions in recidivism represents an extraordinary challenge.

National studies and research, including a Department of Justice study reviewing a wide range of statistics on violent crimes and re-offenses (*Violent Felons in Large Urban Counties*, 2006 U.S. DOJ) show that more than half of violent crimes in US were committed by those individuals who had previously been convicted of a felony. As a way to reduce this trend, the study calls for “heavy” investment in reintegration efforts and cites effective programs that couple education and vocation programs with community job search programs.

Research consistently shows “the link between post-release employment and recidivism” (*Outside the Walls*, 2004 Urban Institute study). In this and other studies, the research suggests that individuals who are working and earning a good wage are less likely to return to prior criminal behavior. In support of this contention, the Urban Institute re-entry roundtable has further found that “more importantly, employment can increase the skill level, breadth of job experience, and earnings levels of former prisoners.” To further this belief, in Massachusetts alone, 67% of individuals who violate the terms of their parole are unemployed or not in the workforce at the time of their violation. (Massachusetts Parole Board, 2008)

*Outside the Walls* also examined the performance of several major federal investments over the years to employ ex-offenders (i.e. Manpower Demonstration and Training Act, 1962; Transitional Aid Research Project, 1963; and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, 1973). While the studies document only limited reductions in recidivism, they also cite the lack of “job placement assistance, case management, and other follow up services” as key reasons for the limited reduction in recidivism seen from these programs. Recognizing this fact, the Task Force has identified existing example programs and suggests a model framework for re-entry that imbeds these essential “wraparound” services into successful ex-offender employment programs.

The economic impact of not addressing barriers to employment for rehabilitated ex-offenders and ensuring their successful re-employment is clear. The national unemployment rate of ex-offenders one year after release may be as high as 60%, according to a 2006 MDRC/Center for Employment Opportunities study. This creates a consistent drain on state and community resources that carries with it significant additional costs for housing, feeding, and providing medical care for these individuals if they are not earning income to support their families.

## NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON RE-ENTRY

In 2008, the Pew Center on the States issued a report entitled *One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008*, an examination of the penal system in America. This report details state and regional prison growth rates, identifies how correctional spending compares to other state investments, and describes what some states are doing to limit growth in both prison populations and costs while maintaining public safety. In its report, the Pew Center indicates that at the start of 2008, 2,319,258 persons were incarcerated in the United States, meaning that for the first time in our history, 1 in 100 persons in the U.S. are behind bars.

In 2006, the U.S. Department of Justice (U.S. DOJ) issued research findings on the prison population that are cited in the Pew study. The U.S. DOJ findings included the following:

- One in 30 men between the ages of 20 and 34 is behind bars.
- One in nine black males between the ages of 20 and 34 is behind bars.
- Men are still roughly 13 times more likely to be incarcerated than women, but the female population is expanding at a far brisker pace.
- For black women in their mid- to late-30s, the rate also has hit the one-in-100 mark.
- One in 53 adults in their 20s is behind bars; the rate for those over 55 is one in 837.

The staggering number of individuals in prison in the nation serves as a significant indicator of the scope of the re-entry crisis that states will confront in the years ahead. According to a 2004 Center for Impact Research study, more than 630,000 persons were released from federal and state prisons in 2004, with “hundreds of thousands” more released from local jails.

Given the expanding prison population and the fact that 97% of inmates will at some point be released (based on the number of individuals given life sentences), the need to address successful re-entry for ex-offenders, including employment outcomes, has never been more urgent.

## STATE PERSPECTIVES ON RE-ENTRY

As of March 2008, over 25,000 individuals within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts were incarcerated in state and county correctional facilities. These individuals were split between the 16 Department of Correction facilities and the 13 Sheriffs who have statutory responsibility to operate County Houses of Correction. This prisoner population breaks down as follows:

- 14,000 county (Approx count, Feb, 2008)
- 11,000 state (Approx. count, March 2008)
  - Includes 10,016 criminally sentenced inmates (those not being held pre-trial).
    - 7,792 of these (78%) have a release date within five years.

Additionally between 20,000 and 25,000 individuals per year are released as “ex-offenders” in Massachusetts on average. These individuals come from a variety of facilities, including those serving time in federal prisons returning to their community in Massachusetts, those released from state correctional facilities, and those processed by the county houses of corrections. In addition to individuals leaving prisons, a significant number each year are charged with criminal offenses that result in a disposition short of incarceration. These individuals do not have access to a specialized “re-entry” program, which are available for a portion of individuals leaving prisons.

***Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Re-Entry Population Overview***

<b>Type of Offender</b>	<b>Average Number per Year</b>	<b>Types of Re-Entry</b>
<i>Federal</i> – Those individuals returning to a community in Massachusetts from the custody of the Federal corrections system.	1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals re-entering their community after serving time in a federal institution</li> <li>• Individuals sentenced to a combination of incarceration and probation by a federal court.</li> <li>• Individuals sentenced to probation instead of incarceration.</li> </ul>
<i>State</i> – Those individuals returning to a community in Massachusetts from the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction	2,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals re-entering their community after serving time in a state correctional institution.</li> <li>• Individuals released on parole to complete sentence.</li> <li>• Individuals sentenced to a combination of incarceration and probation.</li> </ul>
<i>County</i> – Those individuals returning to a community in Massachusetts from the custody of the County Houses of Correction	22,000*  <i>* The size of the county re-entry population is related to the relatively shorter average length of sentence (6-9 months) of county offenders.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals re-entering their community after serving time in a county correctional institution</li> <li>• Individuals released to the Parole Board to complete sentence</li> <li>• Individuals sentenced to a combination of incarceration and probation by a state court</li> <li>• Individuals sentenced to probation as an alternative to incarceration.</li> </ul>

## **BARRIERS TO EX-OFFENDER SUCCESS**

Besides their criminal histories, ex-offenders re-entering communities across Massachusetts face significant barriers that inhibit their success in training and/or employment settings. These barriers can be grouped into 3 major categories, which are outlined in greater detail below.

### ***Education***

Although the average age of an incarcerated individual is between 25 and 35, typical education levels for inmates at entry are at the middle school level or below, based on the Test of Adult Basic Education, given at intake to inmates. According to a 2001 Urban Institute study, about 70% of ex-offenders are high school dropouts. Even more troubling, from an employment perspective, is that the Center for Law and Social Policy in Washington, DC estimates that about half of ex-offenders are “functionally illiterate”.

### ***Health***

Individuals exiting correctional facilities have often lacked preventative medical care for significant portions of their lives prior to incarceration. Ex-offenders face serious medical issues at a much higher rate than the population as a whole, with significantly higher rates of HIV and Hepatitis being foremost among these medical issues.

Additionally, often, prior to incarceration, offenders have not had access to options that can help them to manage addiction and cope with mental illness.

### ***Other Barriers***

Individuals exiting correctional facilities face other significant obstacles limiting their ability to gain employment and increase their earnings over time. While criminal history, education, and mental health are some of the more prevalent barriers, many offenders spend significant amounts of time away from families, jobs and housing. These absences often present major hurdles to reintegration.

Finding transportation to and from work is typically a major challenge for ex-offenders. While individuals living in urban centers can often take advantage of public transit options, many people who are ex-offenders are unable to find steady transportation options to take them to work in urban, suburban and rural settings.

According to intake interviews conducted by correctional facilities, the typical inmate has, at best, a spotty work history, and is more likely to have never worked. Additionally, time away from their communities while being incarcerated creates gaps in work history that serve as an additional barrier to employment. Unfortunately, more definitive data on the employment of ex-offenders is difficult to develop because the capability to match wage records does not currently exist in Massachusetts.



## FINDINGS & ASSUMPTIONS

During its three sessions, the task force collected and reviewed information from workforce development and criminal justice system organizations serving ex-offenders. During these conversations, the task force was able to make some factual findings regarding the ex-offender population that serve as assumptions for the recommendations that follow. The key material findings and assumptions used by the task force in its work are outlined below.

### *Findings from Material Review and Discussions of the Task Force:*

- A greater number of individuals leave county facilities than state facilities.
- Offenders leaving state facilities tend to experience bigger “gaps” away from the community due to longer sentences (an average of 5 years).
- Many ex-offenders test at very low reading and math levels – adult basic education is a significant need both pre- and post-release.
- Access to services to prevent homelessness or treat substance abuse and mental health issues are significant issues for re-entry.
- Limited work history, lack of occupational skills, and severe educational deficits may be more significant barriers than CORI.
- Although immediate employment is a significant need for ex-offenders, addressing low levels of education and limited work history, education and skill training are essential prerequisites to transition ex-offenders to the type of jobs typically available upon release to sustainable employment.
- Providing a primary point of contact for employers is a key element in ensuring success of ex-offenders in employment situations.
- Two distinct post-release pathways currently exist, depending upon whether an individual is released from a state or county institution. (See Matrix – Charts A & B)
- The most significant community services available to ex-offenders include 8 Regional Re-entry Centers, 25 Community Corrections Centers, and 37 One Stop Career Centers (See Chart C).
- Because the first 72 hours are key to keep from going back to old behavior and criminal life, programs and services should be structured to increase the likelihood that ex-offenders leave incarceration with employment and housing connections.
- Recidivism is reduced if pre-release services, transitional planning and re-entry programming are in place – a continuum of support both pre- and post- release.
  - An individual’s “re-entry” planning needs to start on day 1 of incarceration.
  - Community transition services need to be set up and in place for an individual upon the day of release (and even prior to release date).

It is important to note that there are gaps in service for ex-offenders across all the correctional, workforce and educational systems serving this population. Any effort to establish a more comprehensive and successful re-entry program will require increasing the resources and capacity of these systems across the state.

The above represents a set of existing conditions and core assumptions about what makes for a successful re-entry for an ex-offender. The two charts that follow provide an overview of services offered for some inmates, at some state and county correctional facilities.

## PROGRAM REVIEW – DIRECT SERVICE FOR EX-OFFENDERS

A primary responsibility of the Task Force was to review existing state and community organization models currently providing service to ex-offenders. As outlined on the two (state and county) re-entry matrices that are attached, offender re-entry falls into two distinct phases, in terms of program offerings for inmates – pre-release services and post release services. What follows is an overview of existing pre and post release programs, including education, training, and support services provided to the offender population.

<b>Types of Pre Release Programs for Offenders</b>			
<i>Federal</i>	<i>One Stop Career Center</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>County</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal Bureau of Prisons offers pre-release programs for inmates in federal corrections facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selected One-Stop Career Centers have implemented “behind the wall” orientations for offenders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Correction (DOC) offers pre-release programs for inmates in state correctional facilities.</li> <li>Department of Correction staff and inmates create Individual Program Plans for some inmates.</li> <li>Guided by Commissioner’s re-entry principles.</li> </ul> <p>*Services highlighted below</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County Houses of Correction offer pre-release services that vary at each of the 14 facilities.</li> <li>Type and intensity of service depends upon the type and length of sentence and on the philosophy of individual Sheriff.</li> <li>Staff and inmates complete an Individual Re Entry Plan for some inmates.</li> <li>Guided by 8 principles for re-entry.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health, substance abuse treatment (required by 8<sup>th</sup> amendment)</li> <li>GED, ESOL</li> <li>Job training</li> <li>Transition planning</li> <li>Day 1 connection to supervision (all federal ex-offenders are subject to supervision)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Career Center membership</li> <li>Job Readiness training</li> <li>Inmates meet with counselors from career centers to facilitate post-release connections.</li> </ul> <p><i>* New Bedford is one example of this model.-see page 14</i></p>	<p><b>Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health, substance abuse treatment (required by 8<sup>th</sup> amendment)</li> <li>Job training</li> <li>Transition planning</li> </ul> <p><i>Educational Services</i></p> <p>GED, ESL, Special Ed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2,268 enrolled</li> <li>926 on wait list</li> </ul> <p>Vocational Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>638 enrolled</li> <li>1,932 on wait list</li> </ul> <p>College</p> <p>472 enrolled</p>	<p><b>Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health, substance abuse treatment (required by 8<sup>th</sup> amendment)</li> <li>Job training</li> <li>Transition planning</li> </ul> <p><i>Educational Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GED, ESOL</li> <li>Vocational education</li> </ul>

<b>Post Release Programs for Ex-Offenders</b>				
<i>Federal</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Probation</i>	<i>Job Placement</i>
Programs or service “centers” do not exist because all federal prisoners are supervised through the US probation office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 Regional Re-entry Centers - Overseen by the Parole Board –</li> <li>• 8837 served (2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Wrapped</i> County ex-offenders (complete sentence) are free and utilize voluntary resources</li> <li>• Supervised county ex-offenders use parole or probation services, as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 Community Corrections Centers - overseen by Office of Community Corrections (within Office of Commissioner of Probation)</li> <li>• 4,900 served (approx. 2007)</li> <li>• Used by county and state inmates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 37 One-Stop Career Centers overseen by Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development</li> <li>• 1042 served (Offender 728; Probation/ Court Involvement 314) *OSCC customers are not required to report their CORI status to staff, thus, this number is conservative.</li> </ul>
<b>Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These individuals are provided with referrals to service organizations through relationships between federal probation with state or regional workforce and corrections resources in communities.</li> <li>• Contract services are used for wrap around. (e.g. mental health, substance abuse)</li> </ul>	<b>Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate IDs</li> <li>• Health care</li> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Clothing and food</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Transportation &amp; employment services</li> <li>• These centers are in Brockton, Framingham, Lawrence, Mattapan, New Bedford, Quincy, Springfield and Worcester.</li> </ul>		<b>Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Education</li> <li>• 839 took GED/ 145 passed, (2007)</li> <li>• Job Readiness Training</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Treatment,</li> <li>• Disease Prevention</li> <li>• Health svcs.</li> <li>• Women’s svcs.</li> <li>• Aftercare.</li> </ul> <b>Sanctions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic Monitoring</li> <li>• Community Service</li> <li>• Drug &amp; Alcohol Testing</li> <li>• Day Reporting</li> </ul>	<b>Services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition planning</li> <li>• Employment workshops (new leaf in Worcester)</li> <li>• “Behind the Wall” career center orientations</li> <li>• Specialized case management</li> <li>• Recruitment of employers.</li> </ul>

## **PROGRAM REVIEW – SUPPORT SERVICES**

In addition to services provided directly to offenders, support services for businesses are also offered by different partners in the re-entry system. One Stop Career Centers, Regional Re-Entry Centers and Community Corrections Centers offer employee matching services to businesses interested in hiring ex-offenders. In addition, adult education programs, higher education institutions and the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services offer support services, although not solely designed and funded for the re-entry population.

### **Bonding Programs**

In 1966, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) created the Federal Bonding Program (FBP) as a hiring incentive program to protect employers from certain acts of dishonesty by at-risk job seekers. Federal financing of Fidelity Bond insurance, issued free-of-charge to employers, enabled the delivery of bonding services as a unique job placement tool to assist ex-offenders, and other at-risk/hard-to-place job applicants (e.g., recovering substance abusers, welfare recipients, poor credits, etc.). The bond insurance issued ranges from \$5,000 to \$25,000 coverage for a 6-month period with no deductible amount (employer gets 100% insurance coverage). In Massachusetts, information about the use of the Bonding Program can be obtained at One-Stop Career Centers.

### **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program helps individuals who qualify as members of a target group get a job, and helps employers who hire qualified individuals by giving them a credit on their federal taxes. Offenders (ex-felons) are one of the target groups, and employers may be eligible for a tax credit of up to \$2,400 for each new adult hire under the program.

### **Substance Abuse Services**

The Bureau of Substance Abuse Services offered a variety of services for individuals in FY07 including the following (described in detail in Attachment B):

- acute treatment services (15 programs statewide served 38,801 of which 160 were parole and 3,700 individuals were probation);
- short-term residential support services for men and women (7 programs statewide in serving 2,966 of which 15 were parole and 774 were probation);
- recovery homes (50 programs statewide for 5,081 of which 558 were parole and 1,800 probation);
- therapeutic communities (12 programs statewide serving 814 of which 112 were parole and 336 probation);
- social model recovery homes (8 programs statewide serving 507 of which 64 were parole and 153 probation);
- ambulatory services (71 programs statewide serving 25,706 of which 467 are parole and 7,051 are probation); and
- narcotic treatment (30 programs statewide serving 5,591 of which 11 were parole and 464 were probation).

## **Education and Job Training**

### *Adult Education*

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education commits a portion of state funding for Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language (ESOL) programming to correctional institutions. GED and literacy services are offered as pre-release services. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education funds basic education programs in 12 of the County facilities and at least 4 state facilities.

### *Higher Education*

Public community colleges, the University of Massachusetts and several private colleges have formed partnerships with different correctional institutions to provide GED, ESOL, occupational certificate and degree programs for both inmates and the re-entry population. There are 15 community colleges in Massachusetts. Typically, the availability of these educational programs for ex-offenders changes with major swings in federal and state funding. Attachment A includes information on the following partnerships:

- The North Shore Community College partnership with Essex County Correctional Facility.
- The Bunker Hill Community College Offender Re-entry Program in partnership with the Suffolk County House of Correction.
- The Greenfield Community College “College-Corrections Connection” program in partnership with the Franklin County House of Correction.
- The Mount Wachusett Community College Prison Program in partnership with various Department of Correction facilities.
- The Springfield Technical Community College partnership with the Hampden County House of Correction and New Women’s Prison in Chicopee.
- The Cape Cod Community College “Changing Lives through Literature” program funded by the Court system.
- The Middlesex Community College “Changing Lives through Literature” program funded by the State Legislature.
- The Quinsigamond Community College partnership with the Worcester County Jail and House of Correction.

## **PROGRAM REVIEW – COLLABORATION MODELS**

On the following two pages are descriptions of several partnerships built between correctional institutions and other community partners – ranging from community colleges, workforce boards, one-stop career centers, regional re-entry centers, and non-profit service organizations. These are model practices chosen because of their demonstrated results and are highlighted as a representative sample of the kind of work the Task Force believes is needed to promote successful re-employment for ex-offenders.

### ***St. Francis House***

- Service Provided: The Moving Ahead Program (MAP) is a 16-week job and life skills program enabling men and women to break the cycle of homelessness, addiction, mental illness, unemployment and incarceration. Participants develop vocational and personal goals and practice the skills for living and working in recovery.
- Funding Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant
- Partnerships: Norfolk County Sheriff's Office, St. Francis House
- Service Unique: Approximately half of the 100 or so students served come from incarceration directly under contracts with the Mass. Parole Board and the U.S. Dept. of Justice. Program serves ex-offenders coming out under supervision and those who have wrapped their sentences.

### ***Greater New Bedford Region - New Bedford Career Center***

- Service Provided: The New Bedford Career Center works in collaboration with partners (outlined below) to provide instruction time on job readiness training to referred inmates (designated as pre-release and entering a re-entry) while incarcerated and job search assistance upon release. The New Bedford Career Center Staff provide monthly Career Center Orientations to soon to be released inmates or recently released inmates.
- Funding Source: Unfunded: Currently utilizing Wagner Peyser (WP) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) support which will not be available in FY09 based upon reliable projections of reductions in WP/WIA allocations. Shannon Grant funding has been provided by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to the Hope Collaborative.
- Partnerships: Bristol County Sheriff Department, Bristol Community College, Bristol County District Attorney's Office, Mass. Parole Board Reporting Center, Federal Parole, New Bedford Police Department - Community Policing Unit, New Bedford Veterans Agent, Probation Department New Bedford District Court and the City of New Bedford.
- Program Unique: Provides on-going training on CORI issues to local Community Based Organizations like Hope Collaborative and Street Outreach Workers, Conducts "Second Chance" Job Fairs.

### ***Boston Region - The Workplace Career Center***

- Service Provided: The Workplace offers three programs for ex-offenders: Woman Offender Re-Entry Collaborative (WORC) program for women within a year of release; Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (PRI) for non-violent ex-offenders that have been released within six months; and IMPACT for ex-offenders who are homeless. Programs include different menus of services such as: case management; Understanding Your CORI Report; Learning How to Job Search with a Criminal Record; Help with Developing a Resume and Cover Letter that Best Markets your Skills, Instruction on How to Handle your Legal Issues in an Interview, assistance with vocational development, availability to all of the services provided at the One Stop Career Center, onsite employer recruitment sessions; and employment referrals to CORI friendly employers.
- Funding Source: US DOL; Suffolk County House of Corrections; DTA
- Partnerships: Suffolk County House of Corrections; Suffolk County Sheriff's Office; MCI Framingham; SPAN
- Program Unique: WORC takes a holistic approach, servicing re-entering woman by dealing with all the barriers they may face including such issues as housing and transportation.

### ***Hampden County Region - CareerPoint Career Center***

- Service Provided: Hampden provides several services/programs including: "Building Bridges" Workshop; Hampden County Sheriff's (HCS) Re-entry Program; "Bridging the Opportunity Gap for DYS youth; HCS Work Readiness Workshops/Case Management; Re-Entry Employment Program (REEP) Program – the programs are designed for various ex-offender populations: male, female, adult, youth, pre-release and post-release. All adult programs include case management and workshops on work readiness, resume preparation, job development, Career Center orientations, education and training information and referral to After Incarceration Support Systems (AISS). The youth program including extensive case management and develops internships with employers.
- Funding Source: Shannon Grant, HCS Re-Entry Program Grant, Community Foundation Grant; HCS Work Readiness Workshop Case Management Grants; Corporation for Public Justice Grant
- Partnerships: Hampden County Sheriff's Office; CareerPoint; FutureWorks; AISS; DYS
- Program Unique: Hampden programs focus on "cognitive restructuring" (ie. behavioral training). The workshops encourage participants to take control of and responsibility for their lives and provide them with practice in skills they will need to achieve the life they want.

## **PROGRAM REVIEW –STRATEGY AND MODEL FOR SUCCESSFUL RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

### *Elements of Successful Re-Entry Employment and Training*

- Successful re-entry models are based on regional partnerships between correctional institutions, parole, probation, community corrections, the state workforce system, employers and community organizations.
- Key partners include adult education providers, higher education institutions, Workforce Boards, One-Stop Career Centers, Regional Re-entry Centers (RRC), Community Corrections Centers (CCC), health providers and others.
- These organizations form a partnership to define a “continuum” of services for an offender – beginning on “Day 1” of incarceration. See overview chart.

### *Current Costs Associated*

State agency and community organizations providing direct service to inmates and re-entry populations currently seek out specialized federal or other grant programs to support program delivery. The task force review of existing state programs operated by state criminal justice and workforce development partners indicated that some have re-assigned priorities and resources to re-entry models. There is agreement between those currently paying for these services from specialized grants and from those leveraging operational budgets that full implementation of a re-entry model will require expanded resources and capacity of correctional, workforce development, education and other community systems. The task force gathered data and proposals on costs associated with these types of models.

### *Model Re-Entry Framework*

The chart that follows outlines a model framework for successful ex-offender re-entry. The model captures pre- and post-release education and training options, as well as support services necessary for an offender to have a successful re-entry to the workforce and to their community.



## **Model Timeline/Interventions Required for Successful Re-Entry Employment and Training**

### Day 1 Services/Pre Release

- **Assessment.** Facilities administer health, mental health, education and skill assessments.
- **Mental Health, Substance Abuse Treatment.** Upon incarceration, offenders need access to services.
- **Service Plan or Portfolio.** Offenders create a service plan based on assessments that outlines service needs during incarceration and extends beyond release.
  - Should include plan/strategy to attain basic employment documentation prior to release, including: birth certificate, Social Security card, Mass. ID and MassHealth card.
- **Education and Skill Development.** Offender enrollment in adult education (GED), ESOL, vocational training, college preparation and coursework and job readiness workshops.
  - *Certificates/Credentials* - programs that give an offender something as a “take away” are a valuable tool in job search post-release.
- **Work release models** as a key best practice to provide individuals with work experience and skill development and the potential for employment post-release.
  - *Articulation Agreements* – Agreements with employers to “credit” offender with employment history for company earned while in a work release program.
- **Transition Planning** begins prior to release to identify:
  - Connections to housing
  - Enrollment in MassHealth (access via Virtual Gateway)
  - Organizations and referrals for mental health, substance abuse, and health care.
  - Regional Re-entry Center, Community Correction Center or One Stop Career Center services needed for post-release.
- **Linkages for ex-offenders built with service providers prior to release.** Approaching release, connect offenders to service providers prior to release or “behind the wall” based on transition plan – direct referral, provider orientations etc.

### Post Release

- **Transport** to appropriate community resource.
- **Housing, Mental Health Substance Abuse Support Services.** Resources to provide these services simultaneously must be in place upon leaving a correctional facility. (72 hour window)
- **Coordination of Services and Case Management.** Upon release, a contact individual should be identified to connect the ex-offender to community resources. Often, Regional Re-entry Centers & Community Correction Centers provide case management for ex-offenders, referrals to employment, substance abuse, mental health, and other services. “Wrapped” individuals (completed sentence) need incentives to engage.
- **Employment Planning and Placement.** Regional Re-entry Center & Community Correction Center make referrals to One Stop Career Center. Offender brings “portfolio” to work on employment planning and getting a job while Career Center acts as employer contact.
- **Education and Skill Development.** Resources for ex-offenders to access education (ABE/ESOL, post-secondary) and occupational training to enhance job prospects and income.
- **Liability Protections for Employers.** Education about federal bonding and work opportunity tax credit.
- **Employer Outreach Strategies.** Models should include employer outreach strategies for pre- and post-release placements, including employer breakfasts (to market population), assignment of a job developer to support the individual on the job and handle employer concerns etc.

## STRENGTHS & GAPS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

### Strengths

- **Interagency collaboration** – Everyone is at the table and working (in regions and now at the state level) towards a solution.
- **Shared “Passion”** to create programming and support the re-entry population – The Task Force’s work has shown that the key partners are willing to spend the time necessary to develop a robust and successful re-entry framework that supports employment and training.
- **Shared “Philosophy of Re-entry”** – Everyone agrees that employment is important, but everyone also realizes that providing services to address housing, mental health, substance abuse and low educational levels is critical to the success of the individual and ability to find employment.
- **Promising practices** across the state, including:
  - *Department of Correction* – Strong system of health, education and skill assessments in place with corresponding ABE/ESOL program to increase the population’s educational and vocational attainment. These programs are profiled in the previous section.
  - *Parole* – Support for the 8 Regional Re-entry Centers and connections in regions between key partner agencies (workforce, transitional assistance, mental health, criminal justice). These programs are profiled in the previous section.
  - *Sheriff’s* – Several Sheriffs are leaders in building post-release services by working in partnership with other organizations. , e.g., Hampden program, Common Ground Institute.
  - *Workforce System* – 3 regions have developed significant partnerships with correctional institutions and created targeted services for ex-offenders behind the wall and at OSCCs. These programs are profiled in the previous section.

### Gaps

- **Communication gaps between state stakeholders**, which makes the sharing of information on offenders difficult.
- **Data sharing** between county and state corrections systems to determine if people return to jail after completing programs while incarcerated.
- **Incentives for participation** by offenders who are “wrapped” or not required to report to a Regional Re-entry Center or Community Corrections Center.
- **Sharing employer leads** across regions without breaching confidentiality or multiple requests to employers.
- **Engagement of the larger business community** in seeing ex-offenders as a source of employees and employer misconceptions about hiring ex-offenders.
- **Correction institutions with limited capacity to provide pre release services** because of overcrowding (e.g., turning program/class space into bed space).

- **Community organizations with limited capacity** to provide intensive services, case management and access to adult education/ESOL/post-secondary education without dedicated resources.
- **Adequate resources to support education, training and job placement collaborations** to support the size of the re-entry population.
- **Linkages between correctional facilities and community organizations driven by personal contacts**, not system design.
- **Lack of employment outcome data** for ex-offender populations, make it difficult to prove that investments work.
- **Child Care** gaps and/or targeted resources for ex-offenders which do not recognize custodial responsibilities of female ex-offenders.
- **Inability of current systems** to mandate or provide incentives to participate in education and training for offenders.
- **Lack of a Driver's License, public transportation or access to a vehicle.**

## PARTNERSHIP AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Discuss Task Force recommendations** with state and regional stakeholders who did not participate in the Task Force.
- **Build formal regional connections** between criminal justice, education, health, and workforce systems that promote and support “Day 1” re-entry planning.
  - State could issue “seed funding” to support regional partnerships.
  - State partners could identify regions with the highest re-entry populations and invite regional partners to a focus group meeting to review the Task Force Report.
- **Establish quarterly meetings of a Workgroup on Ex-Offender Employment**
  - Co-chaired by EOPS and EOLWD, creates state level coordination.
  - Joint pursuit of federal resources (Department of Justice) to fund regional collaborations.
  - Invite judiciary partners to participate to monitor progress.
  - Invite regional partners to participate.
  - Invite employer organizations (chambers, industry associations) to participate.
- **Review existing (Department of Correction and Massachusetts Sheriff’s Association) “principles of re-entry”** and consider adopting a consistent statewide re-entry framework to be used by correctional facilities and community organizations providing services.
- **Support the on-going Executive Office Public Safety and Security/Department of Correction ITD master planning effort** to increase capability to improve data tracking and analysis needed in order to evaluate the impact of re-entry programming on recidivism rates within and between state and county correctional facilities.
- **Build, approve and adopt the use of a common template or “portfolio” for ex-offenders** for use behind and outside the wall by all partners. Build off the existing portfolio tools developed by various partners with input and buy-in from other major stakeholders (county, workforce partners etc) and allow for needed regional flexibility.
- **State partners organize regional orientations on successful re-entry models for front-line staff** to encourage communication and better understanding of regional resources.
- **Expand capacity of pre-release programs** for adult education, ESOL, job training and work readiness. One option correctional institutions (state and county) could consider is contracting with One-Stop Career Centers, adult education organizations, and community colleges and others to provide additional adult education, job readiness and vocational training “behind the wall” to supplement existing staff.
- **Expand the capacity of regions to support post-release services for ex-offenders.** Fund the competitive grant program referenced in the Executive Order 495.
  - Require that regional applicants demonstrate that they have established relationships and joint service designs.
  - Fund programs that adopt the *Successful Re-Entry Employment and Training Model* highlighted in the Task Force Report.
  - Require evaluation of the impact of services on recidivism.

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CHART A – County Pre and Post Release Pathways

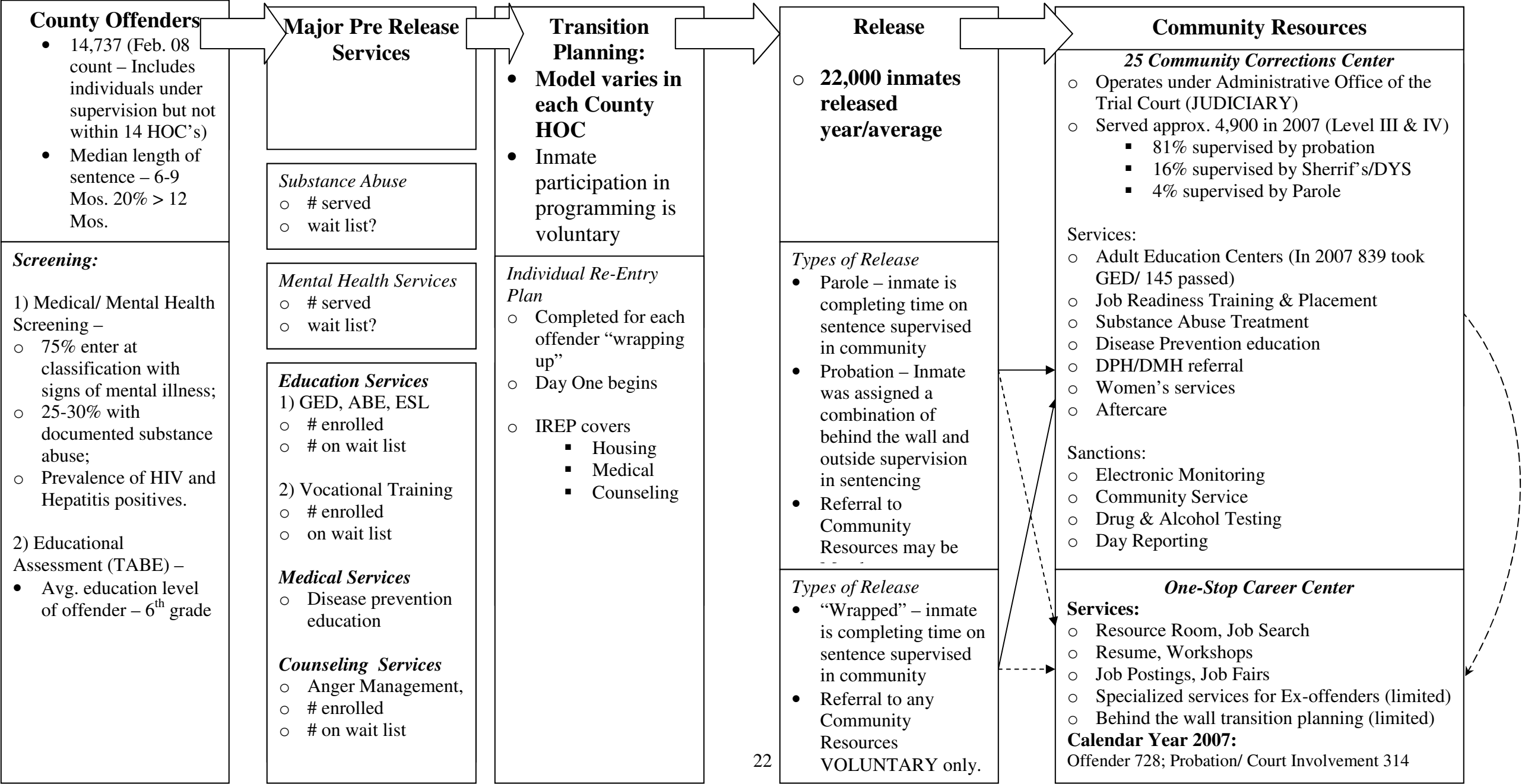


CHART B - State Pre and Post Release Pathways

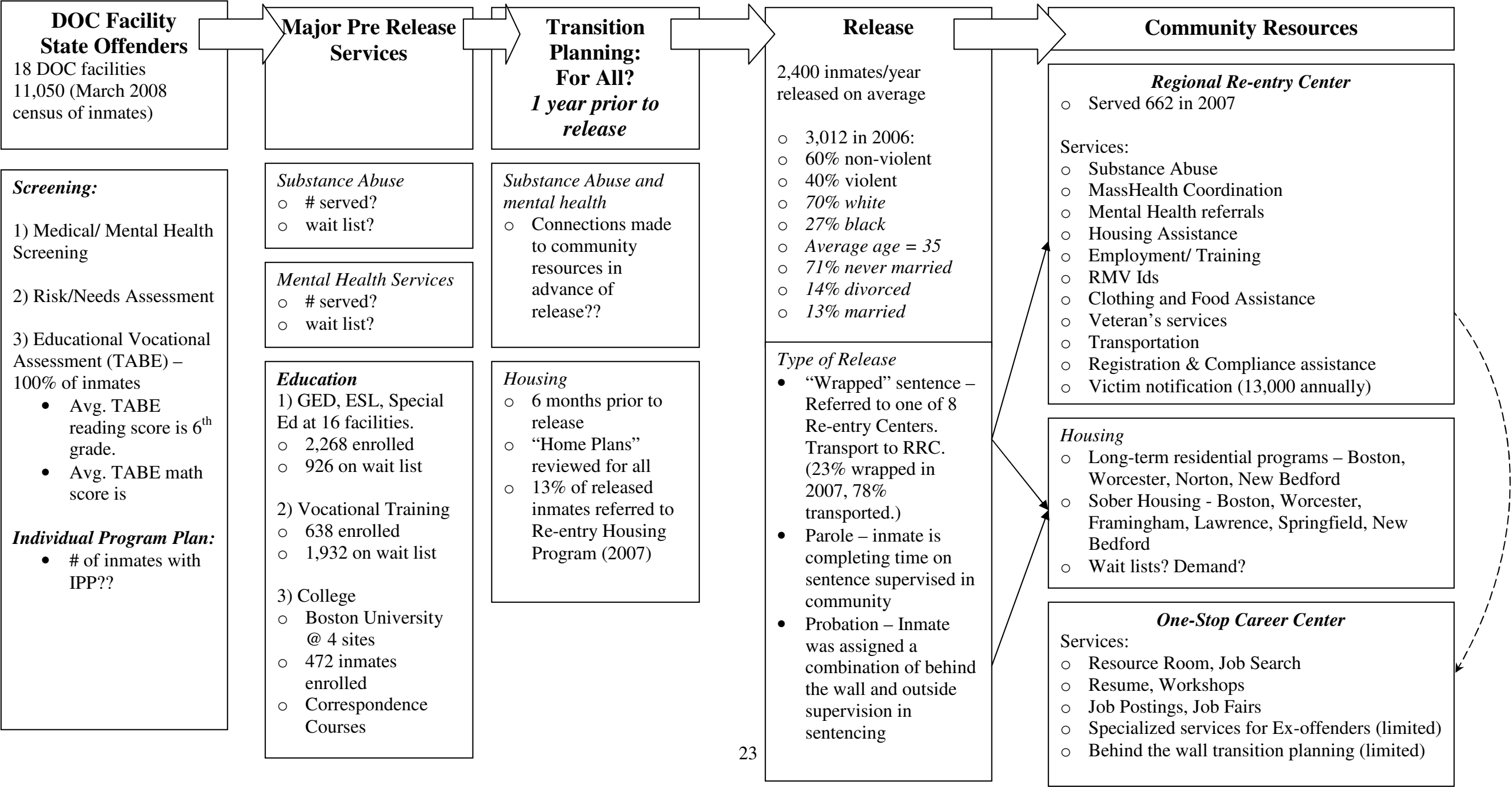
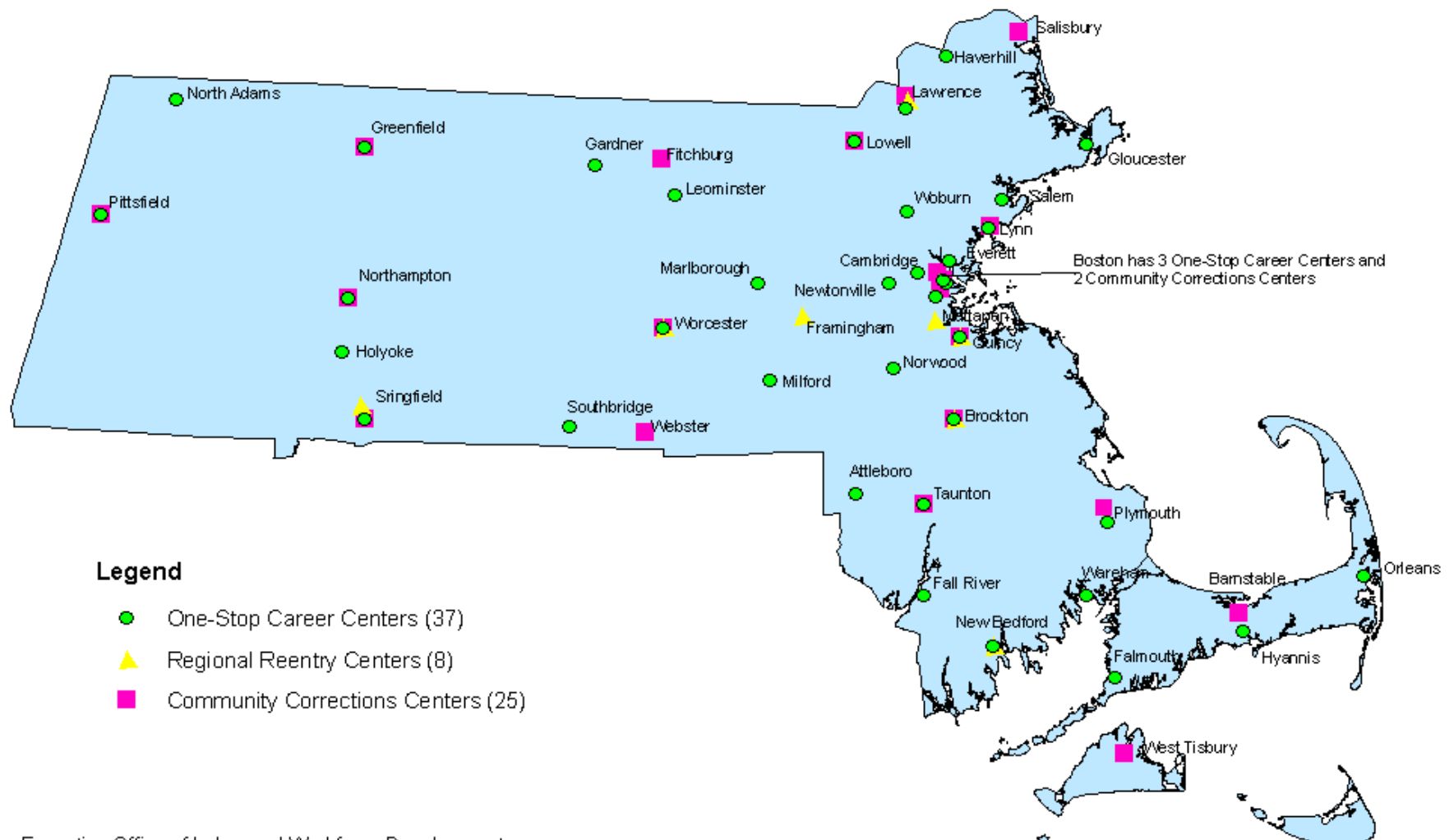


Chart C

## Massachusetts Service Options for Ex-Offenders





## ATTACHMENT A

### Community College Re-Entry Partnerships

#### **Changing Lives Through Literature- Middlesex Community College**

CLTL is an educational alternative-sentencing program whereby probationers engage in weekly literature seminars with professors, judges and probation officers in conjunction with probation and often in lieu of prison. The women's branch was founded by an MCC professor and more than six programs have been based at MCC over the last 10 years. First offered through the Massachusetts courts, CLTL is now nationally and internationally known and operates in more than six states and in England.

#### **Changing Lives Through Literature - Cape Cod Community College**

We have had for more than a decade a program called Changing Lives Through Literature in which offenders reaching a certain number of offenses such that they are facing mandatory sentencing are allowed to opt for enrollment in a literature course taught by a local judge teaming with one of our adjunct faculty. Through the study of literature, the offenders begin to reflect on their own lives, such that dramatic reductions in repeat-offending are achieved. The program is funded through the Court system, and was adopted by modeling a similar program offered in other counties in the state. In addition, we work with the GED providers at the local county jail to encourage ex-offenders to enroll in classes upon release.

#### **Greenfield Community College - College-Corrections Connection**

Collaborating with the Franklin County House of Corrections education staff, Greenfield Community College created the College-Corrections Connection which provides skills-building educational opportunities for inmates. Six week courses in English and math were developed and designed to accommodate students with differing educational backgrounds and skills levels, and provide each individual inmate with a foundation for future learning. Students can receive college credit for successful completion of each course which can be applied toward a certificate or associates degree from GCC North Shore Community College

#### **North Shore Community College - Don Danells Scholarship Program**

The Don Danells Scholarship (established in 2003) is named after a long-time volunteer at ECCF and Lawrence Correctional Center. Scholarships are awarded annually to men and women who: are currently or were formerly involved in the Essex County Correctional system, have a history of program involvement and completion within the system, and have a high school diploma or GED. Recipients attend NSCC (Lynn or Danvers) and are linked to the TRIO program for specific support services. The Essex County Correctional Facility also employs part-time a "Scholarship Coordinator". He interviews applicants and then meets with them during the semester to ensure ongoing contact and course/program completion. 18 students have received scholarships; we are expecting that two will graduate this year.

#### **Quinsigamond Community College – Worcester County Jail & House of Correction Program**

In November, 2006, the Worcester County Jail and House of Correction (WCJHOC) received a grant from the US Department of Labor to provide an onsite academic program at the correction facility. Quinsigamond Community College, through its Training and Education Center was contracted by WCJHOC to provide a multi-faceted academic program offering courses that sharpen the reading,

writing, and math skills of inmates leading to employment or to entrance into post-secondary education at their time of release.

Participants in the program are inmates who possess their high school diploma or GED. Since November 2006, there have been five 12 week sessions, with 21 classes offered each session. During each session, approximately 150 inmates complete one of the courses offered: Reading/Writing, Math, and Life Skills. The program will end May 2008.

At this time program evaluation is being conducted to document the success of the program. Program evaluation activities include: comparing pre/post tests scores, surveys completed by program participants, five focus groups of program participants, and a comparison of recidivism of pre-program inmates to current program participants.

### **Springfield Technical Community College - Department of Continuing Education**

The Springfield Technical Community College, School of Continuing Education is partnering with the Hampden County House of Correction to offer credit courses to inmates. The STCC School of Continuing Education offers 5-7 credit courses each year at the prison. The number is a variable of having enough qualified students to enroll in a course(s).

Springfield Technical Community College School of Continuing Education allows the Pre-Release Center to utilize classroom space; free of charge, to teach a GED prep test to ex-offenders currently affiliated with Hampden County House of Correction's Pre-Release Center. This class runs year round, with rolling enrollment.

Hampden County House of Correction supplies a staff member who coordinates with the STCC School of Continuing Education's Financial Aid and Admissions departments to place ex-offenders in College when they are released. That staff member also assists students with required paperwork, such as FAFSA, admissions forms, etc.

The Springfield Technical Community College is also working with the New Women's Prison in Chicopee and hope to have courses offered at that facility shortly. Springfield Technical Community College School of Continuing Education offers GED Testing at the prison by sending our staff members to administer the test.

## ATTACHMENT B

### Bureau of Substance Abuse Services – Department of Public Health

#### **Acute Treatment Services**

Provide detoxification and related treatment aimed at alleviating acute biomedical, emotional, and behavioral distress resulting from the use of alcohol or other drugs.

##### **Level III – Medically Monitored Detoxification – Level A**

Under consultation of a medical director, ATS programs offer twenty-four hour nursing care to medically monitor and treat an individual's withdrawal. Treatment includes orientation; evaluation and diagnosis; medical services, including a physical examination and laboratory tests; pharmacological services; counseling services; HIV and AIDS related services; health education, including HIV/AIDS, STD, and TB prevention and treatment; and aftercare and referral services.

(BSAS provides funding for 15 ATS programs statewide – in FY 07 there were 39,801 admissions – 160 of those admissions identified themselves as being on Parole – 3,700 on Probation)

#### **Transitional Support Services**

Are short-term residential support services for substance abusing men and women. These services are known as “next step” programs and are designed to bridge the gap in the service continuum between acute treatment services and residential rehabilitation services or other aftercare. Transitional Support Services provide stabilization, intensive case management, and comprehensive discharge planning services to individuals who require a safe and structured environment to support their post-detoxification recovery process.

( BSAS funds 7 of these programs statewide – In FY 07 there were 2,966 admissions – 15 of those admissions identified themselves as being on parole and 774 as being on Probation)

#### **Residential Services**

##### **Recovery Homes**

Provide a structured rehabilitative environment for individuals recovering from addiction to alcohol and/or other drugs. These programs emphasize client recovery and treatment within a structured, therapeutic milieu existing in the community. Clients are encouraged to integrate with the community and to access community resources.

(BSAS funds 50 of these programs statewide – FY 07 admissions totaled 5,081 – 558 identified themselves as being on Parole and 1,800 as being on Probation)

##### **Therapeutic Communities**

Provide a highly structured environment that emphasizes client treatment and recovery within the parameters of the program structure. The clients take an active role in this mode of treatment helping them to take responsibilities and become positive role models.

(BSAS funds 12 of these programs statewide – FY 07 admissions total 814 of which 112 identified themselves as being on Parole and 336 as being on Probation)

### *Social Model Recovery Homes*

These programs emphasize peer counseling and case management to assist clients in providing each other with a culture of recovery, support, sharing, and positive role modeling. Clients are expected to be involved in the external community (work, education, volunteer, etc.)

(BSAS funds 8 programs statewide – FY 07 admissions totaled 507 of which 64 self identified as being on Parole and 153 as being on Probation)

### **Ambulatory Services**

Provides treatment for adults and adolescents, their families, and/or significant others experiencing the dysfunctional effects of the use of alcohol or other drugs. Clients are assisted in gaining and maintaining skills for a drug-free lifestyle. Services include: assessment and treatment planning; individual, group, and family counseling; case consultation; health education, including HIV/AIDS, STD, and TB prevention and treatment; aftercare planning and referral; as well as individual outreach and psycho-educational groups for pre-treatment individuals.

Day treatment provides each client with a minimum of four hours of counseling, a minimum of three times a week.

(BSAS funds 71 programs statewide which had 25,706 admissions of which 467 identified as being on Parole and 7,051 as being on Probation)

### **Narcotic Treatment**

Provides medically monitored methadone services for opiate addicted clients. These services combine medical and pharmacological interventions with professional counseling, education, and vocational services. Services are offered on both a short-term and long-term basis.

(BSAS funds 30 of these programs statewide,. In FY 07 they had 5,591 admissions of which 11 identified themselves as being on Parole and 464 as being on Probation)

### **Other BSAS Services**

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> drunk driving programs, House of Corrections, Enhanced Day Treatment, Compulsive Gambling, Section 35 programs, Specialized Family Residential, Tewksbury Stabilization, Youth Residential, Supportive Housing, Substance Abuse Shelters, Community Based Case management, and Prevention programs.

(In FY 07 there were a total of 106,684 admissions)